

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-07 BIB-01 CU-02 /076 W

-----200758Z 110119 /11

R 190759Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2258

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USNATO BRUSSELS 520

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0118

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, BU, CSCE

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON CSCE MEETING WITH MLADENOV

REF: SOFIA 0108, SOFIA 0101, SOFIA 0100

1. WE EXPECTED NO SURPRISES AND MLADENOV PROVIDED NONE, EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR A PERSONAL WILLINGNESS TO ADMIT THAT BULGARIA WAS QUITE DEFICIENT IN PROVIDING ECONOMIC DATA UNDER BASKET II. IT IS INTERESTING, HOWEVER, TO COMPARE MLADENOV'S ATTITUDE WITH RESPECT TO NON-PERFORMANCE IN THIS AREA TO HIS ATTITUDE ABOUT BULGARIAN NON-PERFORMANCE ON BASKET III. BASKET II, OF COURSE, IS OF INTEREST MOSTLY TO PROFESSIONALS AND BUSINESSMEN, GROUPS WHICH DO NOT COMMAND MUCH PRESS ATTENTION. THUS HE COULD BE RELATIVELY INSOUCIANT. BUT WITH RESPECT TO BASKET III, WHICH DOES COMMAND THE ATTENTION OF THE WORLD PRESS, HE TOOK QUITE

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A DIFFERENT TACK, PRESUMABLY GIVING A FORETASTE OF WHAT WILL BE THE WP POSITION AT BELGRADE: (1) NO ACRIMONY AND NO ACCUSATIONS PLEASE, LEST THE PROCESS OF DETENTE BE IMPEDED; (2) EVERYTHING TAKES TIME; (3) WE'RE WORKING ON IT; (4) THE WEST, TOO, IS DEFICIENT IN IMPLEMENTATION. AND, (5) A VIGOROUS PREEMPTIVE ATTACK ON RFE/RL.

2. THE FACT IS, HOWEVER, THAT THE ACT OF HELSINKI HAS MODIFIED GOB BEHAVIOR IN SOME WAYS WHICH ACCORD WITH OUR INTERESTS AND CONCERNS IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. FIRST AND FOREMOST, IN CONNECTION WITH DIVIDED FAMILIES. TO BE SURE, MOST OF THE MOVEMENT THAT HAS OCCURRED IN THIS AREA STEMS FROM THE BULGARIAN INTEREST IN BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE US, AND THIS WAS STATED QUITE EXPLICITLY BY ZHIVKOV LAST APRIL IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH SECRETARY BUTZ. BUT HELSINKI PROVIDES THAT EXTRA LITTLE IMPETUS BY CONFERRING A KIND OF "IDEOLOGICAL" RESPECTABILITY TO DOING THINGS WHICH GO AGAINST THE AUTHORITARIAN GRAIN, SUCH AS ISSUING PASSPORTS AND EXIT VISAS TO THE RELATIVES OF PEOPLE WHO LEFT BULGARIA ILLEGALLY.

3. THE HELSINKI ACT OPERATES IN A SIMILAR WAY WITH RESPECT TO THE INCREASES IN WESTERN CULTURAL ACTIVITY THAT HAVE OCCURRED DURING THE PAST YEAR. WHEN THE FRENCH PROPOSE A FILM WEEK, THE BRITISH AN EXPANSION OF UNIVERSITY-LEVEL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS, OR THE US AN EXHIBIT IN HONOR OF THE AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL, IT IS JUST THAT LITTLE BIT HARDER TO SAY NO.

4. I AM FAR FROM SUGGESTING THAT WE SHOULD BE SATISFIED WITH THE MODEST LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE. IT'S NOT MUCH AND IT'S BEEN A TOOTH-PULLING OPERATION ALL THE WAY. BUT WE HAVE LEARNED THAT WITH GREAT PERSISTENCE AND CONSIDERABLE EFFORT, SMALL INCREMENTAL CHANGES IN BULGARIAN BEHAVIOR CAN BE INDUCED. THE SIGNALS FOR BELGRADE SEEM CLEAR: NOT TO ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE DIVERTED
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AND TO KEEP UP THE PRESSURE, WITHOUT STRIDENCY BUT BASED ON WHAT THE DOCUMENT SAYS AND WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC PROVISIONS. THE BULGARIANS (AND THEIR FRIENDS) HAVE ERECTED DEFENSES IN DEPTHJ V EG W THEY MAY WELL HAVE FALLBACK POSITIONS, AS FOR INSTANCE IN THE MATTER OF THEIR ALLEGED "FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES" IN IMPORTING WESTERN PUBLICATIONS.

5. WE HAVE AN OPEN INVITATION FOR FOLLOW-UP CONVERSATIONS WITH MFA CSCE GROUP HEADED BY STAIKOV ON SUCH SUBJECTS AS ADEQUACY OF ECONOMIC DATA, BUSINESS CONTACTS AND FACILITIES, VISA FEES, COMPARATIVE DISSEMINATION OF MEDIA PRODUCTS, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF BASKET III NOT TOUCHED UPON IN DISCUSSION WITH MLADENOV. WHILE WE BELIEVE WE HAVE ADQUATE INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSUE THESE DISCUSSIONS IT MAY BE WELL TO LET A LITTLE TIME GO BY BEFORE DOING SO, AND MEANWHILE DEPT MAY WISH TO COMMENT ON ASPECTS OF THE JAN 14 CONVERSATION. HERZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, COLLECTIVE SECURITY AGREEMENTS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SOFIA00118
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770021-0228
Format: TEL
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770136/aaaabfup.tel
Line Count: 115
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 10e0a2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 SOFIA 108, 77 SOFIA 101, 77 SOFIA 100
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3557545
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMENTS ON CSCE MEETING WITH MLADENOV
TAGS: PFOR, US, BU, CSCE, (MLADENOV, PETUR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/10e0a2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009